

# **FAQ's for the California MUTCD 2014**

[http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/engineering/mutcd/ca\\_mutcd2014.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/engineering/mutcd/ca_mutcd2014.htm)

The following is a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) on the CA MUTCD. If after reviewing this document you have further questions on the CA MUTCD, please email the CA MUTCD Editor at [CAMUTCD@dot.ca.gov](mailto:CAMUTCD@dot.ca.gov).

Be advised that answers to many questions regarding the federal text in the CA MUTCD (shown as black text in the CA MUTCD) may be found at FHWA's MUTCD FAQs website:

<http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/kno-faq.htm>

## **CA MUTCD General Questions**

1. Q: Where can the CA MUTCD be purchased?

A: Caltrans does not sell the CA MUTCD to the public. This manual is not copyrighted and may be downloaded and printed freely from the CA MUTCD website (see link above). The manual is posted on the CA MUTCD website in a high-resolution format for printing purposes. Most individual Chapters are also posted as high-resolution files.

2. Q: How often is the CA MUTCD updated?

A: Federal regulation requires that States update their manual within two years after the Federal MUTCD is updated and published. Generally, the MUTCD is updated every two to five years.

3. Q: Who decides what new traffic control devices are added to the CA MUTCD?

A: The California Traffic Control Devices Committee (CTCDC) provides recommendations and guidance to Caltrans on new Standards, Guidance, Options and Support statements as they relate to new or revised traffic control devices. The final determination, after considering the CTCDC's input, is the responsibility of Caltrans Division of Traffic Operations.

4. Q: How are adoptions of the Federal MUTCD shown in the CA MUTCD?

A: Federal text is shown as black text in the CA MUTCD. Federal text that is not supported by the California Vehicle Code (CVC), the California Streets and Highways Code, or other legislative regulations is shown as deleted (strikethrough). Regulation that is in addition to the federal regulation as it applies to California roadways is shown in

blue text. Information in figures and tables that does not apply to California is crossed out. Figures specific to California have blue titles and always include “(CA)” after the figure’s designation.

5. Q: What does the CA MUTCD cover or include?

A: Official Traffic Control Devices such as signs, roadway markings and traffic signals allowed for use on all roadways in California.

6. Q: Where can I find the specifications for signs listed in the CA MUTCD?

A: The Department of Transportation has standard specifications for California-specific signs listed in the CA MUTCD at the following website:

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/engineering/control-devices/specs.htm>

Standard Specifications on federal signs is available at this website:

[http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/ser-shs\\_millennium.htm](http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/ser-shs_millennium.htm)

7. Q: Who enforces the CA MUTCD? What are the consequences of not complying with the CA MUTCD?

A: Caltrans does not have enforcement authority over other public agencies roadways. Caltrans role is limited to only adopting uniform standards and specifications for all official traffic control devices in California, after consultation with local agencies and public hearings, in accordance with Section 21400 of the California Vehicle Code.

Caltrans and CTCDC roles are limited to traffic control device policies, they do not include making determinations (as "official" or "unauthorized") on a particular traffic control device installed on a roadway by an agency having jurisdiction. Agencies that choose to install or condone installations of traffic control devices that are non-standard may subject themselves to unwanted liabilities.

California MUTCD Introduction and Sections 1A.03, 1A.07 & 1A.08 have numerous references to CVC, Streets & Highways Code, California Government Code for the authority, responsibility and prohibitions related to traffic control devices.

Some excerpts from these sections follow:

In accordance with CVC Section 21401, only word message signs conforming to Department of Transportation standards and specifications shall be placed on streets and highways.

In accordance with CVC Section 21401, only traffic control devices conforming to Department of Transportation standards and specifications shall be placed on streets and highways.

CVC 21400 provides that the Department of Transportation shall, after consultation with local agencies and public hearings, adopt rules and regulations prescribing uniform standards and specifications for all official traffic control devices placed pursuant to the provisions of the Code.

CVC 21350 and 21351 give basic authority to the Department of Transportation and local authorities, in their respective jurisdictions, to place and maintain such official traffic control devices.

The use of unauthorized traffic control devices is prohibited by CVC 21465. Prohibited traffic control devices constitute a public nuisance and shall be removed per CVC 21467.

21467. Every prohibited sign, signal, device, or light is a public nuisance, and the Department of Transportation, members of the California Highway Patrol, and local authorities are hereby authorized and empowered without notice to remove the same, or cause the same to be removed, or the Director of Transportation, the commissioner, or local authorities may bring an action as provided by law to abate such nuisance.